

***Phalacrus* spp. (Col.: Phalacridae): a correction, and remarks on certain names in the genus**

In 1952 I recorded as *Phalacrus substriatus* Gyll. a specimen taken at Blean, East Kent. However, since receiving from the late Philip Harwood a pair of that species, it became evident that the Blean insect was different, and was in fact *P. championi* Guill. (which I had previously taken on Otford Downs, West Kent). An additional reason for making this correction is the possibility that the inclusion of Kent in the distribution of *P. substriatus* by Thompson (1958: 9) was based on the above record.

The nomenclature of one of our species is singularly troubled, so much so, as to invite a few critical comments amplifying those made in my note of 1952. The species in question was added to our list in 1872 as *P. brisouti* Rye, and later equated (correctly) with *P. hybridus* Flach (1888); although Newbury (1907), in introducing the latter as new to Britain, rejected Rye's species as merely a form of *P. corruscus* (Panz.), a mistaken idea, as I pointed out in my 1952 note. Joy (1932) must have overlooked Newbury's paper, since he ignores *hybridus* and, quite indefensibly, places *corruscus* as a synonym of *fimetarius* (F.), a name little used in British works up to then. However, Thompson (1958: 5), in his excellent revision of our Phalacridae, shows the latter to be the earliest available name for *brisouti* Rye, which is placed as "syn. n." of *fimetarius* (F.). Strangely, the name *hybridus* Flach is omitted from the synonymy, an evident oversight as it is included in the bibliography, and likewise from our later catalogues.

As if all this were not enough, one finds (with a sense almost verging on despair) that Vogt (1967), who, incidentally, makes use of all Thompson's figures without published acknowledgement, reinstates the name *brisouti*, with "*fimetarius* Thompson" as a synonym. No authority is cited or reason given for the change-back, notwithstanding that Mr Thompson had obviously examined the Fabrician type of *fimetarius* in the Banks collection at the Natural History Museum, London; and until his identification is shown to have been incorrect, I think that we should continue to abide by it.

Authors are divided over the correct spelling for Panzer's species above, with a distinct majority in favour of *coruscus* as against *corruscus*. Both Thompson and Vogt adopt the single "r", though the former notes it as an emendation due to Paykull (1800). The Latin word does indeed have only one "r". However, if the rules of nomenclature are to be followed, Panzer's original spelling must stand; especially as this choice involves no violent break with existing usage.

*Phalacrus fimetarius* appears to show an interesting divergence in distribution and incidence between Britain and mid-Europe. With us, it is widely spread over most of southern England and in some parts commoner than *P. corruscus*; that is the case for instance, in this district and in at least a large area of north Kent. This contrasts curiously with the data given by Vogt for mid-Europe: known only from warm slopes of the Kyffhäuser and in the Rhineland, very rare (my translation).